

April 17, 2005

Freedom Watch

Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan



Shot, over – Shot, out

F Battery, 7th Field Artillery hammers enemy

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In the distance, an AH-64 Apache prepares to land March 30 at Forward Operating Base Salerno while Marine Cpl. Cameron Baxter, HMLA 773, communicates with the pilots of an AH-1 Cobra helicopter. The unit left Salerno the next day.



Sgt. Douglas DeMaio

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Soldiers from Battery F, 7th Field Artillery Regiment watch for their round to land down-range during a show of force exercise at Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.

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Freedom Watch

Freedom Watch is the weekly publication of Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan.

CFC-A Commander - Lt. Gen. David Barno
Public Affairs Officer - Col. Tom R. Mackenzie

Freedom Watch, an Army publication, is published each Sunday by the 20th Public Affairs Detachment at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan. Printed circulation is 6,000 copies per week.

In accordance with AR 360-1, this Army newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. military overseas.

Contents of the *Freedom Watch* are not necessarily the official view of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, the Department of Defense or the Department of the Army.

Deadline for submissions is 0730 Zulu each Friday. All submissions are subject to editing by the 20th Public Affairs Detachment, located in Bldg. 425, Room 107, Bagram Airfield. We can be reached at DSN 318-231-3338.

Freedom Watch Staff

Commander - Capt. T.G. Taylor

NCOIC - Sgt. James-Denton Wyllie

Editor - Sgt. Matthew MacRoberts

Journalists - Sgt. Douglas DeMaio,

Spc. Barbara Brown, Spc. Jason Krawczyk,

Spc. Tiffany Levesque, Pfc. Vincent Fusco,

Pvt. Cora Gerth

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Football star – U.S. military hero

Pat Tillman honored with USO center dedication

Story and photos by
Sgt. James-Denton Wyllie
20th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - The United Service Organizations and the National Football League teamed up to open the doors of the Pat Tillman USO Center in a dedication ceremony April 3.

The ceremony was held in honor of the former football player turned Soldier, and was attended by service members stationed at Bagram Airfield and NFL players Larry Izzo and Warrick Dunn.

"Pat Tillman was a true American hero," said Izzo. "This center is a symbol of his toughness, pride, intelligence and passion."

The PTC is the first USO center in Afghanistan and features a lounge, game room, service bar, and TV rooms on the first and second floor. The building also has a patio and an outside barbecue deck. A jersey of Tillman's that he wore during his time with the Arizona Cardinals hangs on display over the mantle of the center.

Dunn said that the center will serve to remind troops of Tillman's life.

"This is a guy who walked away from millions of dollars to support his

country," said the Atlanta Falcon running back. "He stood for what makes America great."

In addition to being on-hand for the ceremony, Izzo and Dunn also took time to visit troops throughout Afghanistan. The players had the opportunity to fire military weapons, ride in helicopters, and spend some one-on-one time with service members.

"I have a huge amount of

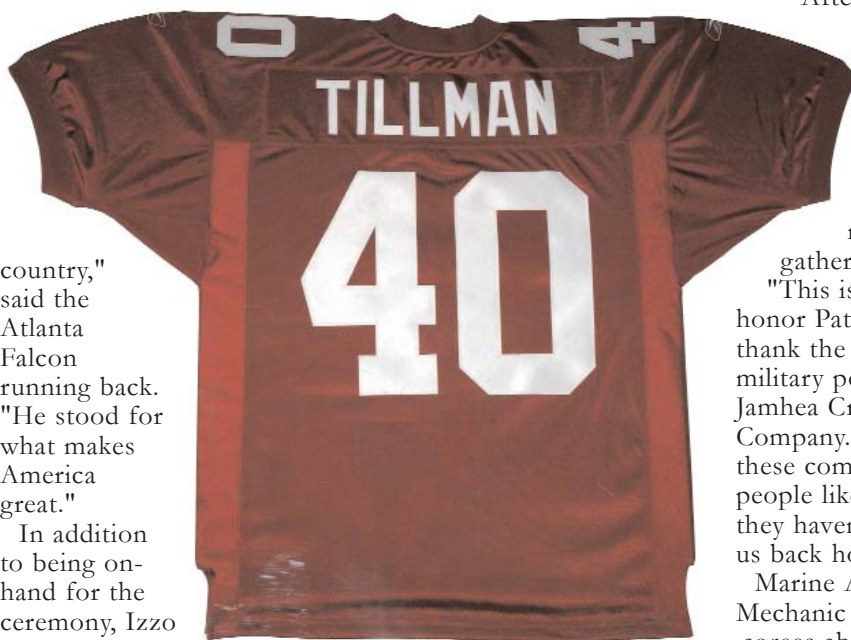
respect for what all of you are doing out here," said New England Patriot Izzo. "Everyone back home does. You all are the real patriots that make our country safer for generations to come."

After the dedication, the players signed autographs and took pictures with service members. The efforts of Izzo and Dunn were not lost on the gathered troops.

"This is a great way to honor Pat Tillman and thank the troops," said military policeman Sgt. Jamhea Cromwell, 690th MP Company. "Celebrities like these coming out here let people like me know that they haven't forgotten about us back home."

Marine Air Frame Mechanic Sgt. David Leza agrees about the positive impact that a celebrity visit can have on troops.

"I definitely think that more of them should come here," he said. "Anything that helps to lift our morale over here is definitely worth repeating."



(Top) NFL players Larry Izzo (left) and Warrick Dunn (right) throw autographed footballs to troops at the opening ceremony of the Pat Tillman USO Center at Bagram Airfield April 3.

(Left) Military policeman Sgt. Jamhea Cromwell receives an autograph from NFL player Warrick Dunn during the opening of the Pat Tillman USO Center.

Just another day at work

Soldiers wear many hats to accomplish mission

Story and photos by
Spc. Tiffany Levesque
20th Public Affairs Detachment

FIRE BASE TYCZ, Afghanistan - The Soldiers of C Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, are fighting an unknown enemy one day, and are fighting to win the hearts and minds of the local villagers the next.

"Since Feb. 10 we've built wells, helped civil affairs hand out stuff to children, rescued flood victims, and many other things to win over the local Afghans," said Spc. Zachery White, an automatic rifleman with Charlie Co.

During our time in country we've also been rocketed, caught high value targets, and found many improvised explosive devices," said White

Although the company's mission is to provide base security and conduct presence patrols, they are prepared to handle other tasks, said White.

"We've had to be very versatile in our role here," said Sgt. Lester Estebe, a team leader in the unit.

Soldiers perform daily duties like standing guard in watchtowers around the base and patrols, said Estebe.

The Soldiers of C Co. also support the other military forces on base during missions and guard Afghans when they are brought on base for questioning.

The Soldiers had to work outside their normal mission duties once more when the Bagram Surgeon Cell arrived March 22.

"The Soldiers handled the security for the surgeon cell's cooperative medical assistance program, played with the children, chatted with the locals, and helped out where needed," said Estebe.

While on guard at night, the Soldiers watch for suspicious activity near the base. They keep an eye out for people with weapons and those who might be planting IEDs, said Spc. Casey Kauok, an automatic rifleman.

"We've been very successful," said Kauok. "There's not been an attack since we've been here and we're finding less IEDs."

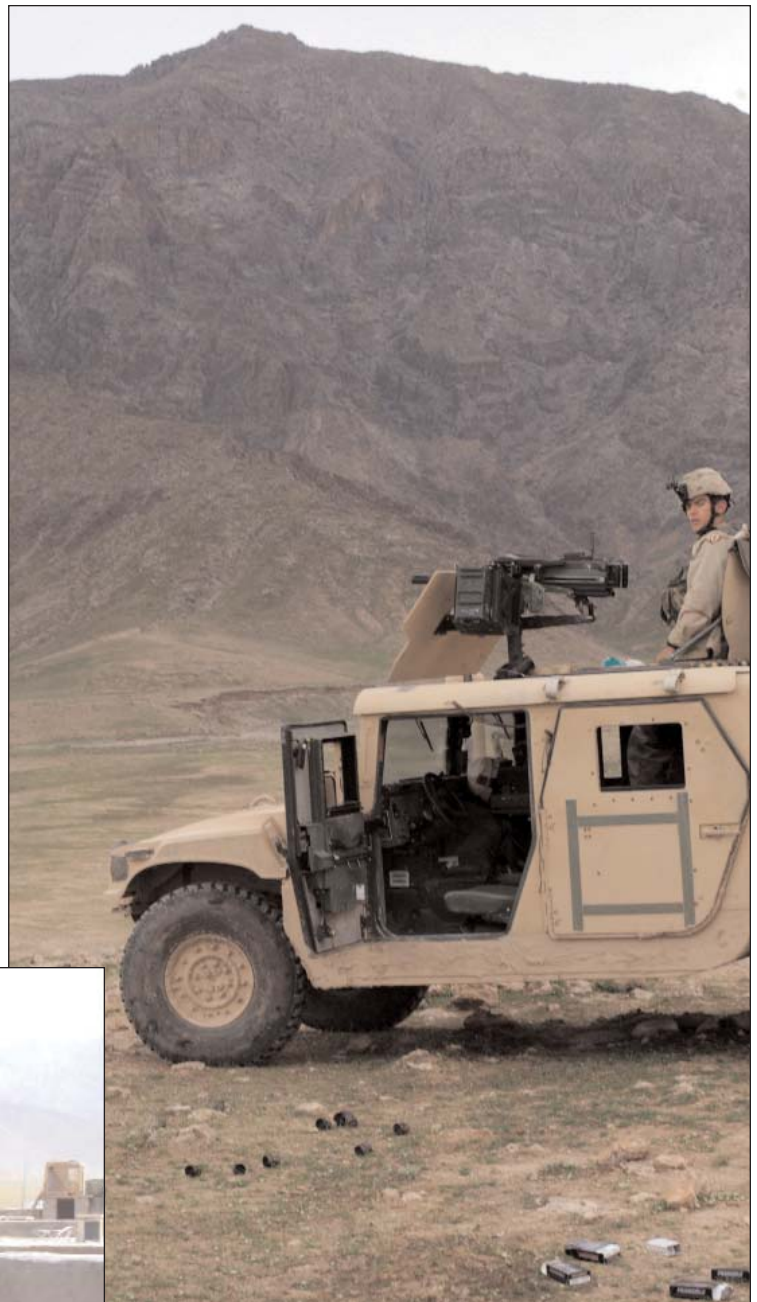
The Soldiers feel like they are making a difference not only in the safety for those on base, but in winning over the Afghans.

"This week

I've been able to see the fruits of our work," said White. "The locals are looking at us with less fear and they are thanking us for all that we've done."

In a few weeks the Soldiers of C. Co., 2nd Bn., 5th Inf. Rgt., will be relieved by another group of Soldiers.

"When we leave we know that those who follow will be safer because of what we have accomplished," said Estebe.



(Top) Spc. Timothy Watson of C Co., 2nd Bn., 5th Inf. Rgt., stands guard while on a presence patrol March 24.



(Left) Pfc. Marlon Seaton, from Charlie Co., keeps an eye out for the enemy while on guard duty.

Coalition and Afghan leaders meet; road and irrigation plans discussed

Story by
Pfc. Vincent C. Fusco
20th Public Affairs Detachment

KHOWST, Afghanistan -- Members of the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team and Afghan government ministry leaders discussed public work ideas in a meeting March 24.

The ideas were part of a five-year plan to construct permanent roads in Khowst Province and the surrounding areas.

Minister of planning Mohammad Omer Aren discussed important issues with Andy Krufft, the field program officer for U.S. aid for the province.

According to the plan, the Ministry of Public Works will be responsible for paving the roads from downtown Khowst and other provinces to each district.

Asphalt roads were decided to be a better option than gravel, which must be maintained every three months.

The MPW already has heavy machinery, but maintenance and

employment opportunities are major problems. The government is working to mobilize the people into a properly trained work force, said Aren.

Once a work force is mobilized, the PRT will purchase materials and pay laborers in food, rather than cash.

Another issue discussed was the building of retention walls in the province. These walls would help with flooding during the rainy season, when buildings can be swept away by floods.

Every year for three months, the rivers flood, wash away houses and mosques, and cause irrigation problems.

A road construction and maintenance program funded by the United Arab Emirates was proposed at the meeting. The program would train engineers in building stone and concrete irrigation walls and road maintenance.

Residents currently use materials such as wooden boxes and chicken wire to solve irrigation problems temporarily.

Afghan election security

Story by
Pfc. Vincent C. Fusco
20th Public Affairs Detachment

KHOWST, Afghanistan -- Members of the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team met with local and national security leaders March 23 to discuss security measures for the Sept. 18 parliamentary elections.

The goal of the meeting was to express the need for immediate voter preparation, and protection for the United Nations' movement of materials to the polling centers.

Khowst provincial logistics coordinator Philbert Rwigamba, and Khowst's Civil Military Operations Center commander Master Sgt. Edith B. Horn, discussed force protection and local education issues concerning the election.

An overview of what U.N. operations will do for security was addressed, as was a timeline of April to June to prepare for the nomination process of candidates. Included in the timeline is a plan for Afghans to have access to civic education explaining the candidates and the political positions.

See **SECURITY**, Page 11

Enduring Voices

What will you do for Mother's Day on May 8?



Air Force Staff Sgt. Salvatore Urbano
455th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron
"I'll give her a call and tell her how much she means to me."



Army Sgt. Fredrick Mender
6th Cavalry Regiment
"I'm going to get her a drawing of a picture of me in uniform and some flowers."



Marine Capt. David Mills
Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan
"I will be coming home, so that will be an early Mother's Day gift for her."



Army Spc. Mikel Gutierrez
69th Transportation Company
"I bought her a rug I'm going to send her."

Tons of aid supplies delivered to Tulak, Saghar districts

Story by

1st Lt. J. Elaine Hunnicutt

Region Command West - Public Affairs

HERAT, Afghanistan - Combining resources, the Coalition, Government of Afghanistan, World Food Program, Comprehensive Humanitarian Assistance and Catholic Relief Services delivered more than 30 metric tons of legumes, wheat and biscuits to the Tulak and Saghar district centers Feb. 24, 25, 28 and 29 in the Ghor Province to combat the effects of the harsh winter.

"Malnutrition, isolation and disease are the makings of catastrophe here in Afghanistan," said Dr. (Capt.) Brian Rick, Herat Provincial Reconstruction Team medical officer.

"When the snow thaws and we can reach the many tiny and remote villages, then we will know the true extent of the damage," said Rick.

Children and the elderly are the most vulnerable to illnesses like pertussis, also known as whooping cough, said Ricks.

The Coalition and aid agencies transport supplies and doctors into the

region with aircraft to slow the shortages until the roads can clear.

"We are buying time with the air drops for the people of the Ghor Province," said Maj. Dave Johnson, the Civil Military Operations Center officer-in-charge.

"Americans are exposed to these types of illnesses routinely; however our diets and vaccines protect more advanced societies. The pertussis doesn't kill, it weakens the immune system allowing pneumonia to kill the victim," said Rick.

"In Saghar I saw 50 children, and 90 percent of them suffered from mild to moderate malnutrition. They all had an airway disease with a virus," said Rick.

Tulak's population of 5,000 normally loses about 40 people each winter; this year they have lost 80, said Rick.



Army Sgt. Jeremy Clawson

Dr. (Capt.) Brian Rick, Herat Provincial Reconstruction Team medical officer, assessed more than 50 children in Saghar District, Ghor Province; 90 percent were suffering from various respiratory illnesses. The Coalition and world aid agencies delivered more than 30 metric tons of food to help the people of Ghor survive the harshest winter in 20 years.

"That is the litmus test; it gives an indication of the severity."

continued on next page

AAFES SERVICES HOURS OF OPERATION

Bagram Air Base

PX	Massage
0230-1630	0400-1800
Shoppette	Alterations
0230-1630	0430-1430
Burger King	Embroidery
0430-1730	Shop
Food Court	0430-1430
0600-1630	Gift Shops
Coffee Shop	0430-1430
24 hours	Sports Apparel
Barber Shop	0430-1430
0430-1530	Black Ops Store
Day Spa	0430-1530
0400-1600	

Kandahar Airfield

PX	Day Spa
0500-1700	0500-1700
Burger King	Alterations
0430-1730	0500-1700
Pizza Hut	Embroidery Shop
0600-1800	0500-1700
Subway	Gift Shops
0600-1430	0500-1700
Coffee Shop	Sports Apparel
24hrs	0500-1700
Main Barber Shop	Black Ops Store
0500-1700	0500-1700
Lagoon Barber Shop	Leather Shop
0300-1700	0500-1700

TF Phoenix

PX
0430-1630
Barber Shop
0330-1530
Alterations
0330-1630
Coffee Shop
24 hours

Camp Eggers

PX
0430-1630
Barber Shop
0330-1530
Coffee Shop
24 hours

** All times in Zulu/GMT*

continued from previous page

A pair of British journalists traveled on horseback to the remote villages in the northwest of Ghor Province and met with coalition troops in the Tulak District center. The writer and photographer moved through mountain passes, forced to dig out their horses each time the deep snow swallowed them.

In some of the villages through which the journalists traveled, the council of elders - the shura - was pooling resources to ensure each family had food. "These people gave us everything that they had ... it was pretty grim when it comes to food. They asked us not to forget them," said Tom Caghlán, Daily Telegraph.

"The children are half naked and dirty; defecation is everywhere. There

is no sewer system or even a designated area for relieving oneself," said Coghlan.

"The most tragic thing about this situation is that we can't do more. I wish there was a way to open all of the roads and get the food up there," said Johnson.

The Coalition is limited on the areas that they can reach by their aircrafts' capabilities. "We have gone as far as we can. We have supplied Tulak and Saghar districts, on the western border of the Ghor Province, bordering Herat," said Johnson.

"It has been great working with the non-governmental organizations; we are all working towards the same goal, a stable Afghanistan," said Johnson. "However, we can go places that the NGOs can't go because of the resources that we have at our disposal."

"This is the first time I been involved with NGOs on this level; we couldn't do it without them," said Johnson.

Being involved with the humanitarian effort and helping the Afghans has had an affect on the Soldiers.

"We have moved a lot of stuff with our little outfit," said Lt. Col. Tom Webb, Regional Command West operations chief.

"We are helping to save lives and that feels good, from everyone down on the ground



Air Force 1st Lt. J. Elaine Hunnicutt

Snow-capped mountains surround the villages of Tulak and Saghar in Ghor Province, making it difficult for the villagers to get food and medicine. The Coalition, Afghanistan government, World Food Program, Comprehensive Humanitarian Assistance and Catholic Relief Services delivered more than 30 metric tons of legumes, wheat and biscuits to the Tulak and Saghar district centers.

planning the event to ANA who loaded the pallets to the pilots who dropped the cargo. It gives you a good feeling, that you were actually able to make a difference," said Capt. Joel Newsom, Regional Command West operations planner.



Air Force 1st Lt. J. Elaine Hunnicutt

Afghan National Army soldiers from the 207th Regional Command Assistance Group in Herat, Afghanistan, volunteered to unload supplies for the villagers of Tulak in the Ghor Province.

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

Staff from the 249th General Hospital at Bagram Airfield, stabilize an Afghan injured by a landmine. Physicians and nurses from the 249th treat these and similar injuries daily.

*Capt. John Kulig,
249th General Hospital*



If you have high-quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to freedomwatch@baf.afgn.army.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.

Army hammers enemy

Indirect fire devastates enemy forces

Story by
Sgt. Douglas Demaio
20th Public Affairs Detachment

FOB SALERNO, Afghanistan - Not many units have the ability to reach out and touch the enemy as quickly as F Battery, 7th Field Artillery.

This unit from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, makes Bruce Lee's back-fisted punch seem slow.

"We make the enemy think twice before trying to come

at us," said Sgt. David Cruz, of the battery's 5th Howitzer Section.

After several months of being separated into supportive elements for Regional Command South, the unit moved to RC East in September 2004. Upon arrival at Forward Operating Base Salerno they were attacked by anti-coalition militia firing 122mm mortars.

The Soldiers of F Battery responded with 155mm projectiles and an M198

howitzer. With an effective range reaching several miles, these artillerymen were able to put rounds down-range and knock the legs out from underneath the enemy.

"When we introduced the howitzers, we started shaking the ground," said battery commander Capt. Brendan Raymond. "We placed precision fires on an elusive enemy force and we have demoralized them."

The psychological and physical effect the unit has been able to inflict on the enemy has had a strategic effect on security in the region, Raymond said.

"F Battery provides a capability to a maneuver commander unlike no other," he said, "because (the commander) has at his disposal a weapon system that will provide devastating effects on an enemy before he commits his infantry forces into a fight."

As field artillerymen, F Battery recognizes that they are all fire supporters.

"Without a doubt, the most effective way to have a devastating effect on the enemy is to synchronize air to ground and ground to ground assets to deny the enemy sanctuary," Raymond said.

It's like a puzzle coming together all at once, Cruz said. The components materialize into an unbeatable force.

The result of the coordinated effort has proven time and time again to be successful, said Spc. Mario Rasmussen, one of

Cruz's Soldiers in the 5th Howitzer Section.

"When the enemy comes at us, they get caught," Rasmussen said. "The rounds start going down range, and the enemy is on the receiving end of the biggest guns in the country."

For all the firepower the unit possesses, the men's true testament to their worth came in October.

"The defining moment of our deployment was the success of Afghanistan's first national democratic elections," Raymond said.

The other major achievement of the unit was the duties the Soldiers performed during the first five months with RC South, said Sgt. Eduardo Delarosa, another member of the battery's 5th Howitzer Section.

"We came here performing a different (Military Occupational Specialty)," Delarosa said.

Instead of working as field artillerymen, the unit was designated to perform the duties of mortarmen.

"The concept is pretty much the same," Delarosa said of the firing support system. "We used our knowledge of field artillery and applied it to the mortar systems we used."

Prior to deploying, some of the unit's men, including Delarosa, traveled to Fort Benning, Ga., to receive two weeks of training on the mortar systems they used when attached to RC South.

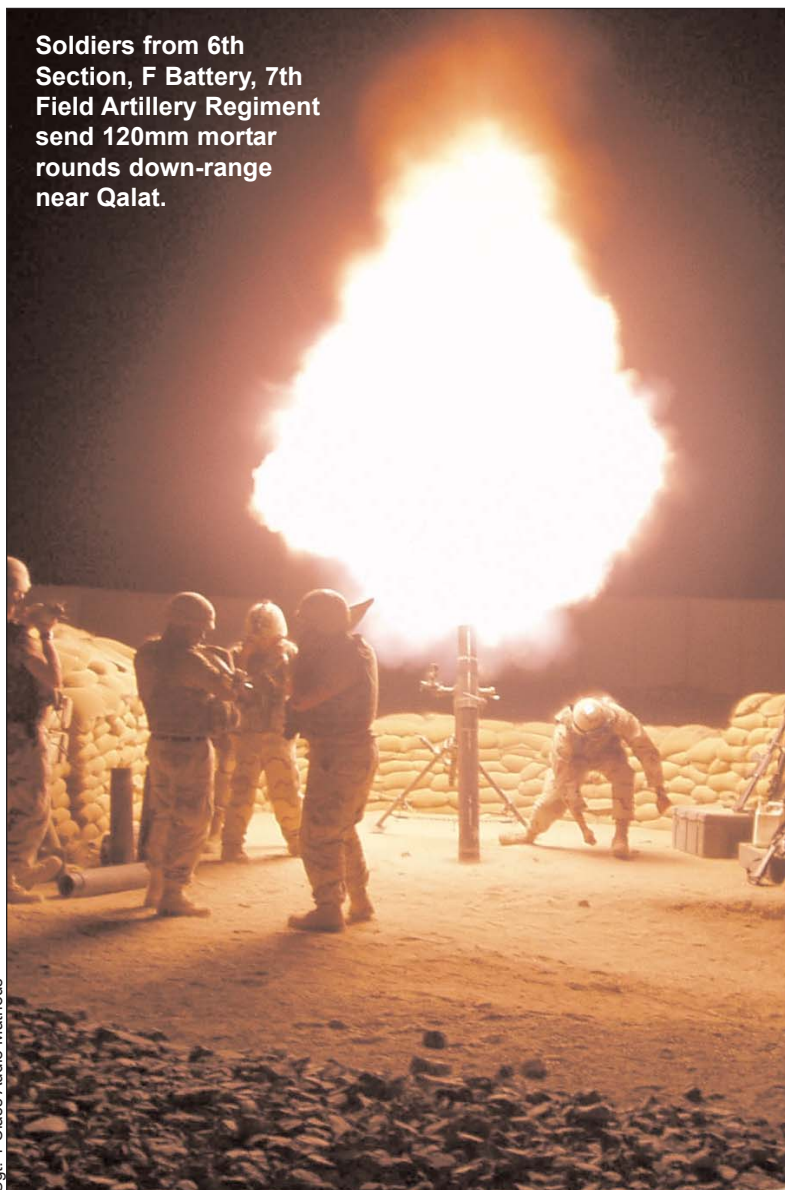
"The training proved to be valuable," Delarosa said. "When we returned back to Hawaii, we taught the rest of our unit the things we learned at Benning."

With only a few weeks left before redeploying, being able to use different weaponry is an area the battery commander intends to focus on in his after-action review, Raymond said.

"One day my Soldiers are

See **ENEMY**, Page 11

Soldiers from 6th Section, F Battery, 7th Field Artillery Regiment send 120mm mortar rounds down-range near Qalat.



Sgt. 1 Class Audie Matheus

NATO looks for new PRT site; team inspects Chakhcharan

Story and photo by
Sgt. 1st Class Darren D. Heusel
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CHAKHCHARAN, Afghanistan - U.S. and NATO troops in Afghanistan took another positive step toward NATO's western expansion March 24 by examining a potential Provincial Reconstruction Team site here.

The PRT would be led by Lithuania, while other NATO nations would provide assistance, said Lt. Col. Gintautas Zenkevicius, commander of Lithuanian forces in Afghanistan.

About 50 engineers, medics, logisticians, planners, operators and force protection personnel from the United States, Belgium, Romania, Canada, Iceland, Lithuania and the United Kingdom boarded a Belgian C-130 in Kabul and headed for Chakhcharan, located 400 kilometers west of the Afghan capital.

The troops met with Ghor Provincial Governor Qadeer Alam, Police Chief Faizulah Salihe and local attorney general Noor Muhammed Kaker, among others, to discuss security concerns and to examine potential sites for the PRT during their six-hour visit.

"On behalf of the people of Chakhcharan, we welcome you," Alam told the delegation soon after their arrival. "Ghor Province is centrally located and, therefore, very important to the people of Afghanistan."

"Obviously, security is very important to us. The people are very poor, but they work very hard," said Alam.

Ghor Province has about 670,000 people

and 383 schools, the governor said. But only 20 of those schools have any infrastructure because of past action by the Taliban and other insurgents.

The province has about 80,000 students, 21,000 of whom are girls.

"Two days ago, the new school year started," Alam said. "But, unfortunately, only 30 percent of the schools have books."

Alam also said the province has about 20 medical clinics and one hospital for the province's nine districts, but few of them have any infrastructure because the people have little or no equipment with which to build.

"This past winter, because of much snow here, the number of (non-governmental organizations) working here was very limited and they were practically non-functioning," the governor said. "I told the people you were coming and I promised them you were coming to help."

"Our people are anxious for your help, just like the other provinces being helped throughout Afghanistan by the coalition and (International Security

Assistance Force)."

Currently, there are 19 PRTs throughout Afghanistan. Their mission is to provide security and help with reconstruction based on the needs of the local population.

This assistance can range from drilling wells to building roads, bridges, hospitals and schools.

Leading the U.S.-NATO delegation was Jerry Watson, a civilian contractor with Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan's Operations Directorate.

"The people who landed in the airplane today represent two organizations in Kabul - the Coalition and the International Security Assistance Force," Watson told the governor and others gathered in a small room in the middle of the city.

"Lithuania has had a very long journey to get here," he said. "They flew in yesterday from Germany and have agreed to establish this PRT here in Ghor Province. The people from the Coalition and ISAF are here to assist them in their reconnaissance today. After which, we will go back to Kabul and assess our findings."

Zenkevicius told the governor that he is from a territory about two times larger than Ghor Province and the one thing they have in common is that Lithuania became a free nation about 15 years ago.

"We hope to work closely with you to do as much as we can," he said. "Of course, we are looking for your support because, without it, we can't be successful in our mission."

"We need to work hand by hand to determine how to solve your problems in a peaceful way. I hope we will have lots of discussions and get to know each other well in the future."



Afghan interpreter Yawar Mirzagul, left, and Ghor Provincial Governor Qadeer Alam give Lt. Col. Gintautas Zenkevicius, commander of Lithuanian forces in Afghanistan, a view of Chakhcharan from atop a mountain overlooking the city. NATO forces traveled to Chakhcharan on March 24 to determine the feasibility of establishing a Provincial Reconstruction Team there.

Landmine safety: It's your responsibility

Story by
Spc. Jason Krawczyk
20th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD Afghanistan, -Conducting missions in one of the most heavily mined countries in the world is not easy. Landmine awareness must always be a factor when planning and executing any mission in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has an estimated 10 million unaccounted landmines scattered throughout the country. The number of unexploded ordnance from decades of conflict only increases the threat.

"On average about 20 percent of ordnance fired do not explode. After two decades of war, the number of unexploded ordnances is immeasurable," said Sgt. 1st Class Erik Ammon, a platoon leader, A Company, 367th Engineer Battalion.

While the U.S Army and other agencies work to demine Afghanistan, it is important to be aware of the danger these explosives pose.

The rain this year has caused landmines and UXOs to be washed down, depositing them onto the sides of roads and trails. As they move they can become active and explode at any moment, said Ammon.

Clearing a minefield consists of clearing about 8 inches down into the earth. Digging deeper than 8 inches could uncover mines that are already too deep to be dangerous.

NATO standards require that a minefield must be 99.6 percent clear. The other .4 percent is something to be aware of, said Ammon.

There is an acronym to remember when encountering a mine field. **SANDI**: Stop, Assess the situation, Note what you see and where, Draw back on the tracks you came in on, and Inform your superior of the minefield. Remembering **SANDI** will allow a person to get out of a deadly situation.

Landmine and UXO safety is every service member's responsibility. Just because a place is said to be clear doesn't mean you shouldn't exercise caution.



Minefield training Soldiers sharpen skills

Story and photos by
Spc. Jason Krawczyk
20th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan, - As the young engineer unzips his bag and removes his mine detector, he surveys the sandy, wind-swept hills he is about to clear.

Before him lie piles of junk, bunkers and trenches - all potential spots to hide mines or improvised explosive devices.

"Clearing mine fields is a long, slow, time-consuming process, and there is no room for error," said Capt. Jonathan Zimmer, the assistant officer in charge of the mine action center. "We go by NATO standards at Bagram Airfield, which means we have to use two types

of methods to clear a minefield and must obtain 99.6 percent clear."

The 367th Engineer Battalion has multiple tools at their disposal to meet the requirements needed to consider a minefield clear, said Staff Sgt. Joshua Gallup, a combat engineer team leader with Co. B, 367th Eng. Bn.

"Usually, we will go through a mine field first with an Aardvark medium flail. Once that is finished, we send in the engineers and dogs."

The Aardvark is a mechanical flail with armored cab capable of withstanding 7.62mm armor piercing rounds." With that much armor it can definitely withstand a mine blast," said Gallup.

In addition to the mechanical devices, canines from the 67th Demining Dog Detachment are used. The 67th is the only unit in the Army

(Top) Staff Sgt. Bauer Ronald of B Company, 367th Engineer Battalion, operates a MV-4 Doking Flail. The MV-4 is a remote controlled mine clearing device.

(Left) Spc. Felife Hernandez, a mine sweeper with A Company, 367th Engineer Battalion, sweeps for landmines in a trench at the new engineer training area. He is using a Handheld Standoff Mine Detection System, which has metal detecting capabilities and ground penetrating radar.



See **MINES** Page 12

Soldiers build new helo-pad

Story and photo by

Pfc. Vincent Fusco

20th Public Affairs Detachment

FOB SALERNO, Afghanistan - A squad of Soldiers worked through the day constructing molds needed to complete a concrete parking area for helicopter traffic at Forward Operating Base Salerno.

The concrete pad is part of a project which includes the new maintenance hangar pad.

"Eventually there will be a concrete taxi area connecting the two sites, with a clamshell covering for the hangar," said Master Sgt. John Twardowski, a platoon sergeant in C Company, 367th Engineering Battalion, a reserve unit from Minnesota.

Twardowski and his Soldiers took over the job of completing the project started by 528th Engineers, a reserve unit from Louisiana.

The maintenance and landing areas are part of a three-month construction plan for the base.

Staff Sgt. Cory J. Poulin, a squad leader with the unit, said that the wet and dry seasons of Afghanistan can be a problem during construction.

"In the summer, starting in late May, there are 120 days of heavy winds," said Poulin. "When it does rain, the ground doesn't absorb water well, so everything runs off."

The 367th was tapped to work on this project for their job efficiency, technique and experience in military and civilian construction. However, many members of the unit are serving at the different fire bases in the country. Only eight Soldiers from the unit are available to work on the parking



Spc. Steven A. Larsen and Spc. Jose L. Valdez work on the molds for a new helicopter parking area.

area site.

When finished, the Army medical evacuation units and Marine Corps forces will use the helicopter landing and maintenance area.

"It's all about improving the standard of living," said Twardowski. "That's what we do. My guys are hard-working, hard-charging guys. They always do their best job. As long as we're here, we want to do as much as we can and do a good job."

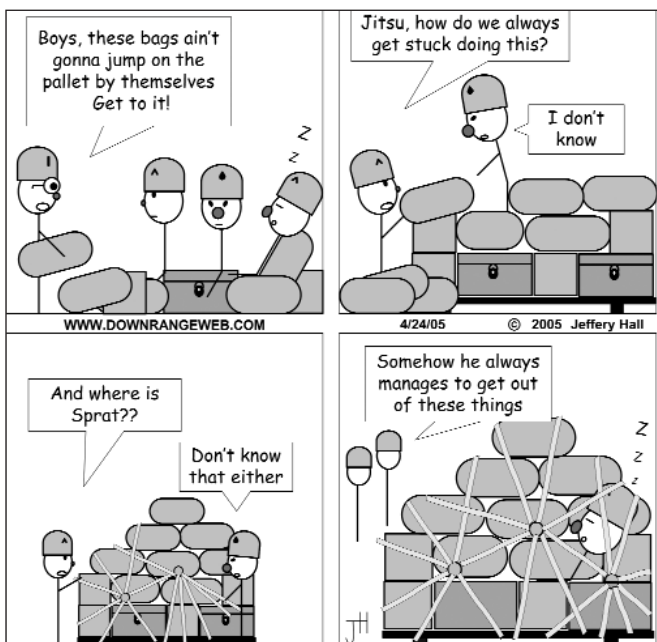
ENEMY from Page 8

artillerymen and the next they are provisional infantrymen," Raymond said. "It's imperative that the men are competent in their basic Soldier skills and the individual tasks which allow them to perform their mission in combat."

Individual tasks support collective tasks, which support the mission essential task list, he said. Having the confidence in their abilities and competence to conduct operations under any circumstance and with any weapon is what has made this unit successful.

As provisional infantrymen, F Battery Soldiers conducted vehicle check points, mounted security patrols, and conducted dismounted patrols and combat operations in urbanized terrain. Their success in Afghanistan is due to their preparation and the unit will continue the tradition of training Fox Battery to be complete and competent warriors.

Downrange



SECURITY continued from Page 5

"They understand that they have the right to select their leaders, but they don't understand the process," said Horn. "Working with the U.N., they will be educated on what the election process truly is."

In a change from last year's procedures, a local count of votes was being requested instead of counting them in Gardez.

This year, Afghans will also be voting on members of the lower parliamentary house.

The voter registration

process will take four to six weeks. If a citizen loses a voter registration card, they will need to go to the local police station to apply for a new card.

Citizens will have to be 18 to vote and will cast their votes only in the districts they reside in.

"They can have a better life," said Horn. "The hope is to foster in the people a greater understanding of that."

There will be another meeting in the middle of April to give a finished operations plan to the Afghan security leaders.

Beat the heat

Story and photo by
Sgt. Douglas DeMaio
20th Public Affairs Detachment

FOB SALERNO,
Afghanistan - As the cold weather fades and Afghanistan begins to reach triple-digit temperatures, Coalition forces may be at risk for heat-related injuries.

"Everyone says they're always drinking enough water, but no one really does," said Gunnery Sgt. Troy Carroll, Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines.

Heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are the most serious heat-related illnesses and usually occur in

the following order.

Painful spasms, usually of the leg and abdominal muscles, are symptoms of heat cramps.

Heat exhaustion, resulting from dehydration or loss of electrolytes, can include such symptoms as headache, nausea, vomiting and profuse sweating.

Heat stroke occurs when an individual has become so dehydrated he or she can no longer sweat. This is the most dangerous of hot-weather injuries and can result in death. Symptoms include hot, dry skin.

"As the weather picks up,

we tend to have more hot weather injuries," said medic Spc. Oitanca Zephier, Company C, 725th Main Support Battalion.

Prevention of heat injuries is a command and individual responsibility, Zephier said.

"If leaders can recognize the situations and activities they place on their unit and the environment that causes heat injuries, they can prevent a heat casualty and can continue with their mission," he said.

"Soldiers' individual responsibility is to monitor their urine and hydrate appropriately."

Thirst and darkened- or yellow-colored urine are beginning signs of dehydration. Heightened awareness of these symptoms can help prevent

service members from becoming heat casualties, but having leaders be proactive about preventing heat injuries is the best method to avoid having a heat casualty, said Carroll.

"The obligation (non-commissioned officers) have to make sure their guys are hydrated is not just to inspect they're drinking enough water. They must ensure they are drinking the right amount of water," said Carroll. "Setting guidelines on when to drink water is a good starting point to ensure our Marines are mission capable."

"For us, if a Marine goes down, the unit will be short-handed and have to

accomplish the same mission. It makes sense to keep our guys hydrated."

In temperatures exceeding 90 degrees, individuals should consume one quart of water per hour, Zephier said, but should not exceed a daily intake of more than 12 quarts.

The purpose of hydrating is to replenish the body's nutrients, not flood them out.

Hyponatremia, a deficiency of sodium in the blood, is just as dangerous, he said.

Drinking massive amounts of water can dilute the body's electrolyte and cause nausea, vomiting or even death.

"It's important we all get enough water, but we must be careful of over hydrating," Zephier said.



MINES from Page 10

that has such dogs, said Gallup. They are trained to work closely with the engineers in finding mines.

A dog will narrow down the location of a mine to about one square meter, and then the engineer uses his probe to locate the mine. If the dogs are not available, an engineer may go in to the field with a Handheld Standoff Mine Detection System, which has metal detecting capability and ground penetrating radar.

Weather plays a major factor in clearing a minefield. It impacts everything from the dogs being able to pick up the scent of a mine to the machinery getting bogged down in mud. The summers in Afghanistan are ideal for mine clearing. With the six mechanical and two manual methods for clearing mines, the 367th will continue.

"Mine clearing is not all about going out to the field with a metal detector and an up-armored bulldozer," said Zimmer.

"We must look through old logs and try to figure out what areas are already clear and what need the most attention."

Spc. Jason Klyne, a wheeled vehicle mechanic from 26th Quartermasters Company, Hanau, Germany, drinks some water prior to attending class on Forward Operating Base Salerno.



Surgeon cell treats local animals

Services will reduce illness in local villages

Story and photos by
Spc. Tiffany Levesque
20th Public Affairs Detachment

FIRE BASE TYCZ, Afghanistan - Task Force Victory Surgeon Cell held a cooperative medical assistance mission for Afghan livestock here March 22 - 24.

Taking care of 3,256 animals is a big step in raising the health level of the Afghan people, said head veterinarian Dr. (Lt. Col.) Mark Martinez.

Livestock in Afghanistan can be infected with worms if un-vaccinated. When eaten, the meat from these animals can pass the

parasites to humans, said Dr. (Lt. Col.) Mike Lennon, an operations officer for the TFV Surgeon Cell.

"Livestock is the largest industry in Afghanistan," he said. "Over 80 percent of families make a living from their livestock."

In addition to treating livestock, the vets also vaccinated any type of animal that the Afghans brought with them.

"Treatment of such animals is important because Afghans use these animals for labor as well as for additional food and clothing," said Martinez.

If the animals are unhealthy and weak, they are little help when it comes to being used for labor, he said.

(Top) Dr. (Lt. Col.) Mark Martinez de-worms a goat belonging to one of the Kuchie tribe.

(Left) Dr. (Lt. Col.) Mark Martinez vaccinates a sheep belonging to one of the Kuchie tribe.



NATO from Page 9

The exact number of Lithuanian troops at the PRT is yet to be determined, but the number is expected to be between 85 and 135 based on the already existing PRTs established by the U.S. and ISAF, according to Watson.

"It could be as high as 200 people," Watson said. "Right now, we just don't know."

Another subject that concerned the delegation was the winter conditions in Ghor Province.

"Recognizing that it does get cold here in the winter, we have to put some measures in place now to prepare for the harsh winters ahead," Watson said.

"It doesn't get much colder here than it does in Switzerland or Germany," the governor quipped. "But our activities are pretty much conducted in this province between April and September."

"In the past, others have come here to make some assessments on paper. Unfortunately, they did not come back. We hope this time that you will stay."

Watson said, as military people, "We understand that."

Alam was relieved as governor less than 24 hours ahead of the delegation's arrival and his replacement remains unknown. He said he has been offered another job in Kabul. He is optimistic his replacement will represent the people of Ghor Province well.

"The one thing I want to assure you is that we are not an organization who is going to leave you when winter comes," Zenkevicius said. "But in order for that to happen, we will need to work together. We are used to cold winters in Lithuania. The only difference is we do not have mountains."

Tool Time:

Puerto Rican Soldiers keep communications connected

Story and photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Darren D. Heusel
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP EGGERS, Afghanistan - Sporting hard hats, goggles, ear plugs and assorted power tools, members of the Army Reserve's 807th Signal Company from Puerto Rico have hit the ground running in Afghanistan.

The 807th, whose primary mission here is to enhance the communication capabilities of the Coalition, has been working long hours in Afghanistan's capital city since arriving Jan. 15 as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The 210-member unit from

Camp Euripides Rubie in Puerto Nuevo, Puerto Rico, is also performing missions in Kandahar, Karshi-Khanabad, Kuwait and Baghdad.

"Once we arrived at Kabul Compound, our first priority was to upgrade the technical control facility," said Sgt. Ricardo Arroyo Rivera of Toa Alta, Puerto Rico.

The new technical control facility will house all the electronics equipment necessary to transmit communications signals on Camp Eggers and the surrounding area, said Sgt.



Sgt. Tommy Torres of Bayamon, Puerto Rico, checks the level on a strip of material that will house new wiring for phones and computer systems in the Lone Star West building on Camp Eggers. Torres is a member of the 807th Signal Company out of Camp Euripides Rubio in Puerto Nuevo, Puerto Rico.

1st Class Pablo Galletti, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the reconstruction project and a member of the 807th.

From there, the Kabul crew moved on to their next projects — installing plastic conduits to hold new telephone lines and cables for classified and unclassified computer systems at two other facilities.

Overseeing the project is the 25th Signal Battalion's 580th Signal Company's Direct Signal Support Team out of Doha, Qatar. The DSST is responsible for providing voice, secure and non-secure communications systems to six locations within the Kabul area, said Sgt. 1st Class William Langley, DSST NCOIC.

The 25th's higher headquarters is made up of military personnel and civilian contractors from the Network Enterprise Technical Command out of Fort Huachuca, Ariz., one of the Army's three major signal commands.

"The experience has been good so far," said Arroyo, who got his start in the communications business by working for a telephone company back in Puerto Rico. "We get a lot of

demands and it keeps us busy, but everyone seems to be happy with our performance."

Arroyo said the only difference in what he's doing now compared to what he was doing for the telephone company is that his crews basically do everything start to finish -- including installing the conduit and all the associated wiring.

Spc. William Entzminger Jr., who joined the 807th as a "filler" from Richmond, Va., said the experience to this point has been a good one.

"The work can be stressful at times, but we feel like we're being productive," he said. "The experience has brought us closer together as a unit."

"It's also been an eye-opening experience for me personally, because I never thought I'd be doing what I'm doing," said Entzminger. "During my (Advanced Individual Training), I worked mainly on telephones, and over here we're involved in the entire construction of the project."

Once the 807th has completed its mission at Camp Eggers the team is expected to move on to other projects at the U.S. Embassy and Bagram Airfield north of Kabul.



Spc. Rafael Correa, of Anasco, Puerto Rico, marks where holes will be drilled on a strip of material that will house new wiring for phones and computer systems in the Lone Star West building on Camp Eggers. Correa is a member of the 807th Signal Company out of Camp Euripides Rubio in Puerto Nuevo, Puerto Rico.

Read To Your Kids program completes 200th taping

Story by

Lt. Col. Frederick Rice

Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan
Public Affairs Office

KABUL, Afghanistan -- Even though service members at Camp Eggers are separated from their families by thousands of miles, they can still read to their children.

Thanks to the efforts of one noncommissioned officer assigned to the Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan, more than 200 parents deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom have done so over the past four months.

The "Read To Your Kids" program was established in late November by Army Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson from the OMC-A Public Affairs Office as a way to bring deployed troops closer to their loved ones while they are away from home. Johnson reached a new milestone as he completed his 200th taping on March 18.

The 200th reader was Sgt. Tania Steele, from OMC-A's Staff Judge Advocate office. She read "The Fairy and the Missing Wand" and "The Way Mothers Are" to her daughters, Shania, 7, and S'Bria, 5.

"This is the first time I have been away from my kids and I just want

them to know mommy is always with them," said Steele.

Based on a similar project he organized during a previous deployment to Bosnia, Johnson's "Read To Your Kids" program offers deployed service members the opportunity to be videotaped while reading children's books to their kids. When each half-hour taping session is completed, Johnson presents participants with their personal video tape and books, along with a padded envelope, to mail home to their families.

"I really like the idea that my daughters can see me reading to them... it is the closest thing to me being there," said Steele. "It just makes me feel like I still have a part in their lives."

While Johnson is very low-key about reaching the 200th tape milestone, U.S. Air Force Maj. Gen. John Brennan,

chief of OMC-A, thinks otherwise. "To dedicate so much time to the benefit of others is truly great and is an inspiration to all of us," said Brennan.

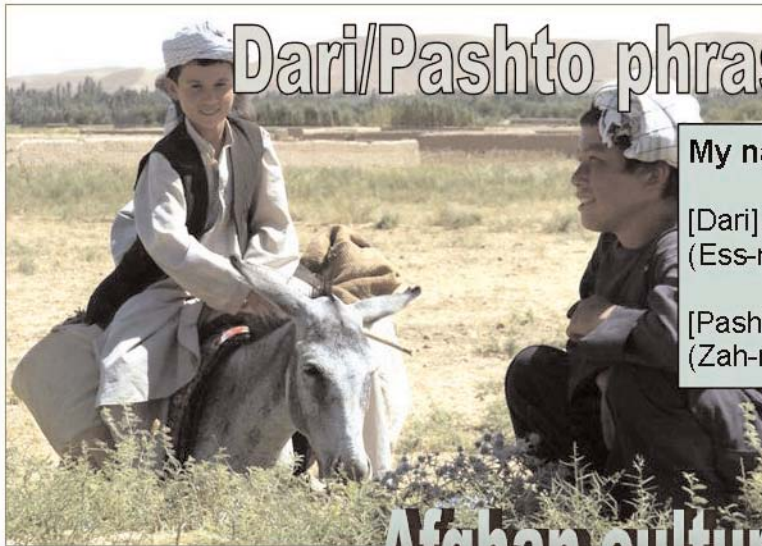
Johnson spends at least 10 hours running the program each Friday, his only day off from a busy work week. He estimates that he has invested more than 125 hours of his time in the program since its inception. According to him, it's a labor of love.

"The feedback I get from the parents who have sent tapes back to their kids has been incredible. It makes the whole program worth the effort," said Johnson.



Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

Marine Corps Staff Sgt. Jamie Looney, an embedded trainer assigned to Task Force Phoenix, reads a story to his children.



Dari/Pashto phrase of the week

My name is _____

[Dari] Esme-i-man _____ ast
(Ess-may mahn _____ ahst)

[Pashto] Zuma noom _____ da
(Zah-mah noom _____ dah)

Afghan cultural tidbit

Boys are usually circumcised about the age of 7, after which they begin wearing turbans. The circumcision is the occasion for a feast, likely to involve wrestling contests and other demonstrations of manliness.

Freedom Watch

April 17, 2005



Overwatch

Security is the issue

Soldiers from C Company, 2nd Battalion, 5th Infantry Regiment, cross a river after assessing wells in Char Cineh, Oruzgan Province. Photo by Sgt. Lester Esches